



YOU must be calm, Mr. Bartley, and tell me just what occurred if you want me to help you," said Hemlock Jones.

"Yes, I will be calm," answered the merchant, making a great effort to suppress his excitement, "but I fear she is dead by this time. Anyhow, if she is alive and can be found, I know you are the man to find her."

Hemlock Jones bowed gravely, and the merchant continued:

"Last night my wife and I had a quarrel—no matter about what. When I showed her clearly that she was in the wrong she grew hysterical and declared that she would end all her troubles by killing herself. I wouldn't have minded that wild talk but for the fact that her father committed suicide several years ago. Remembering this, I was seriously alarmed, and tried hard to soothe her. She would not be soothed, however, and went to bed repeating the threat to destroy herself."

"I sat up several hours, fearing that she might try to carry out the threat. Soon after midnight I fell asleep in the chair. When I awoke this morning my wife was gone. That is all I know about the matter. Oh, Mr. Jones, I would give my life to snatch her from death, for if she has committed suicide I will always feel that I was, in a measure, responsible for the act."

"Give me a description of her," said Hemlock Jones.

"Here is her picture. I thought you would want to see it."

Hemlock Jones gazed at the picture for about a minute, and then walked to the table, picked up some newspapers dated the day before and began to glance over them. Several times he murmured: "Um—yes. So it is," and seemed to be deeply interested in what he was reading. The merchant stared at him at first; then he grew impatient and said: "Well, Mr. Jones, can you do anything for me?"

Hemlock Jones yawned, looked up from the papers and answered: "Of course I can. I can, in the first place, assure you that your wife has not killed herself yet, and in the second place I can tell you where you can see her at noon."

"Where? Where?" cried the merchant. "If I can only see her she will be saved from the grave."

"Very well," said Hemlock Jones. "Go immediately to Beagle's store, walk up the main aisle to the middle of the building, turn to the left, and wait in the next aisle. Your wife will be there at noon. No questions now. You have no time to lose. After you have seen her you can drop in here and tell me about it."

The merchant rushed from the room. At 3 o'clock he rushed in again, grasped both of Hemlock Jones's hands and cried: "I shall bless you as long as I live. I found her just as you said, our quarrel is made up, and I am the happiest man on earth. She told me she had intended to jump in the river this evening, so if I had not come to you she would be lost to me. Now tell me, I beg you, how you knew she had not committed suicide and was at that place?"

"Just a little simple deduction," replied Hemlock Jones calmly. "First I saw by her picture that she was a pretty, stylish woman. Then I turned to yesterday's newspapers and read that the first Spring opening of the season was to take place at Beagle's at noon to-day. Deduction: That woman, however strongly bent on suicide, would postpone her destruction until she had seen that opening. See how simple it is?"

"Right all through," commented the merchant. "She told me she had made up her mind to go from the store to the river."

"Not an Office Seeker."

As I rode into Bisbee's Corners I met the Post Office coming up the main street. It was a second-class Post Office, and it did not belie its class in the least. It was a flimsy frame structure, and its eccentric conduct was accounted for by the fact that it was mounted on rollers and was dragged along at snail's pace by a windlass, the moving spirit of which was a doleful looking mule.

"What building is that?" I inquired of a group of loungers who were watching the exciting proceedings and concurrently exuding large quantities of advice and tobacco juice.

"That's the Bisbee's Corners Post Office," replied a one-eyed man who was whittling a shingle. "She's got a great old move on, ha! ha!"

I agreed that she had, and then made inquiry as to the destination of the dilapidated structure.

"Wal, I'll tell ye," replied the one-eyed man, as he borrowed a plug of tobacco from another lounge and cut off a huge slice. "The most enterprising citizen in this town, present company being always excepted, of course, is Square Hopkins, the long-headed justice of the peace. He's jes' the man to serve the town in an official capacity, but unlike most of these here politicians, he's the modestest man in four counties. We've been workin' with him here for months tryin' to git him to stand as a candidate fer Postmaster, but he's so blamed modest he won't do it fer love nor money."

"Dumdest modest man ye ever see!" cried another of the crowd.

"The only thing we could git out of him after beggin' an' pleadin' fer weeks," continued the one-eyed citizen, "was that in his opinion the office should seek the man, and actin' on that suggestion we are a-movin' her up onto his lot as fast as that old mule kin hump her along."



Not as Dangerous as He Looked.

The gentlemanly life insurance agent rang the bell at the house of one of his company's heaviest policy holders.

"Excuse me," he said, "but I noticed something unusual on the side of the house under your bedroom window. May I ask what it is?"

"It's a couple of cracks in the wall," said the insured. "The building is quite an old one, and is not considered exactly safe. 'Will it affect my interests with your company?'"

"Oh, no, not at all. At first I thought it was a patent fire escape you had put up. In that case I would have been compelled to raise your premiums 10 per cent. Good morning."

His Terrible Plight.

Take pity on a man who lolls,
Because, you thee,
A pretty girl forever lth
A myth to me.

In the Heat of the Conflict

HE—Do you think your judgment is as good as mine?

SHE—Oh, no, dear. Our choice of life partners proves that it isn't.

A New Reading.

"Sure, they call this a free country," said old Mike to the Paudane,
"An' yit they shtop the Irish from a-wearin' of the grane."

"Oh, daddy, is it true indade?" "It is; this day I sane"

"A sign that read, 'Kape off the grash,' an' asht what it cud mane,

An' a felly passin' by at meself he winked his eye,

Phwin I asht him what the m'anin' was he gev me this reply.

"Sure, they put the sign 'Kape off the grash' where it is alsy sane;

'Ts to prevint the Irish from a-wearin' of the 'grane.'"

Versatile.

MRS. COBWIGGER—I'll be busy all this week, dear. Our club has appointed me on a committee to visit the tenements and show the poor people how they can beautify their homes by growing flowers in boxes on the fire escapes.

COBWIGGER—That's funny. Only last week you were on a committee to report on the obstruction of fire escapes.

The Bills will Remain the Same.

"We are ruined!" exclaimed the president of the gas company, as he staggered into the office and fanned himself vigorously with a handful of five-hundred-dollar bills that were lying upon the desk.

"What is the matter?" asked the secretary, turning pale. "Has somebody invented a burner that will consume more than 50 per cent of the gas our extra pressure forces through them?"

"Worse than that," said the president feebly. "They propose to apply the Bertillon system of measurement to our gas metres to prevent its escape."

As to the Lamb.

Mary had a little lamb,
And how poor Mary cried,
For oh! the lamb cost 60 cents,
With green peas on the side!

Operations Postponed.

JUSTWED—If you will get me the oil, my dear, I will oil the casters in this chair so they won't creak.

MRS. JUSTWED—But there isn't a drop of castor oil in the house.



THE editor was in the midst of his article on "Beet culture from an Ethical Standpoint" when a long-haired man rushed excitedly into 'he sanctum and exclaimed

hurriedly: "I sent you a Scotch dialect poem yesterday by mail. I want it quick as you can get it!"

The editor looked up calmly. "Compose yourself, sir," he said. "We have our rules. Your poem will be carefully read by experienced and competent persons, and if found suitable to the columns of our publication, check will be sent you by mail. If not available, it will be returned to you, provided you enclosed"—

"Stamps," said the long-haired man. "I'm on to all that. Let me have the poem quick, will you?" "You are going to try to find another publisher?"

"No, I'm going to try to find a stomach pump if I don't get that poem right away! Where is it?"

The editor adjusted his glasses and began to look over the pile of letters and manuscripts on his desk.

"It is very unusual," he said, "and quite contrary to our rules." Something extraordinary must have happened to throw you into such haste."

"There has," said the long-haired man. "I'll explain while you are pawing around through that food for the waste basket. I got a prescription from my doctor for a cold yesterday, and had it on my writing table alongside of the poem. I'm afraid I mailed you the prescription by mistake."

"Can't you find the other paper?" asked the editor.

"Look a little faster, will you? I took the paper that was left to a drug store and had it filled—cost me 85 cents. I've taken five doses of it, and I'm awfully afraid it's the wrong thing."

"Doesn't it help your cold?"

"No, it doesn't help my cold. Furthermore, I believe that druggist put up that Scotch dialect poem, and I've been taking a teaspoonful of it every three hours since. First dose I took my wife asked me if it eased my cough, and I said: 'Hoot awa' wid ye. I'm no speirin' to sleep a wee bit the nacht! What kind of a way is that for a man to talk? Last night I felt funny about the head, and first thing I

knew I had drank about a quart of Scotch whiskey, bought a barrel of oatmeal and a bagpipe, and when my wife came home from shopping I was prancing up and down trying to dance a reel and singing 'Maxwellton's Braes Are Bonnie' to beat the band. Did you ever hear of plain, ordinary cough syrup affecting a man in that kind of style?"

"It certainly does seem a little strange," said the editor.

"That's it!" said the long-haired man excitedly. "The one in your hand. I feel another spell coming on, and I'll be jabbering in a minute like a lot of golf players in a row."

The editor took out the inclosure and read:

"Syrup of squills, one ounce; fluid extract of tolu, half an ounce; compound syrup of wild cherry and horehound, two

ounces; elixir of—something—does this sound like your poem, sir, or?"

"Thanks," said the long-haired man. "I'm going now to call on that druggist and kick him till he looks like a second hand Scotch plaid terrier on a Christmas tree if he doesn't tell me what he put in that 85 cent dialect prescription. The clan won't recognize him when I get through with him."

The long-haired man went out whistling "The Campbells Are Coming," and the editor looked carefully in the envelope for a stamp, and then went back to his beats.

History Repeats Itself.

"It's the same little old red school house, just as it was when I came here as a boy fifty-five years ago," mused the benevolent old gentleman with the cane, wiping a suspicion of moisture from his glasses.

"There's the same newly broken window pane toward the boys' side of the playground; yes, and that must be the guilty young rascal getting wallowed for breaking it, now! he! he! he! ha! ha! ha!" And here comes the glad, laughing, shouting crowd out at recess. I declare, it takes me back to my happy boyhood! ho! ho! ho! he! he! ha! ha! How we used to romp and tear and innocently guy any old gawk of a passerby who stopped to watch us, sometimes hitting him lightly with an apple or piece of soft dirt. Ha! ha! ha! he! he! ha! ha!"

"Hi! git onto the old fossil!" a shrill voice called out, interrupting the old gentleman's reminiscences.

"Swat!" an apple deftly thrown sent the old gentleman's hat off into the mud.

"You blankety, blank, heathenish blank little devils!" he stormed, dancing up and down, purple with rage. "You are a blankety blank pack of blank, blank blankety blank young reprobates that will all be hung some day. Blank you!"

He seized his hat and dove for the young individual who wore the most bland and guileless countenance of the laughing, shouting crowd, who took

to his heels and expeditiously disappeared through a hole in the rear fence of the school yard, just as the old gentleman had done himself fifty-five years before.



Why He Wouldn't Forget.

"Can I trust you to mail this?" asked Miss Jawkins of the new boarder, "or are you the kind of man who carries letters around in his pocket for a week before mailing them?"

"You may trust me," said the new boarder, taking the letter. "I was cured of that disease at my first attack. I was boarding in the same house with a very good friend, a married man. He lost his wife suddenly and was inconsolable. Loads of letters came to him from sympathetic friends, and one of them was handed to me to give to him by the postman. I carried it upstairs to my room and inadvertently put it into my desk with a lot of rubbish from my breast pocket, and then forgot all about it."

"Just a year after my friend had so far forgotten his loss that he became engaged to a very pretty girl. The morning of the wedding, to which I had been invited, I was putting my desk in order—a habit I have about once in six years—and I came across the letter for him. Forgetting the time at which it had come I hurried downstairs with it, and with many words of apology handed it to him. He had a habit of reading out loud, and he began: 'My Dear Jack: You have received a blow in the loss of your wife from which you will never recover, but don't forget, my dear fellow, that—' Then he dropped it and glared at me. 'I didn't go to the wedding; and he's never spoken to me from that day to this. Yes, indeed, you may trust me to mail your letter without fail.'"

A QUESTION.

You wear sweet popples at your throat
And on your brow's fair top,
Pray tell me, dear, is that a hint
You want some one to pop?

A Pensioner.

He passes down the street with footsteps light,
A hero who has won his thousandth fight
No wreath of laurel crowns his furrowed brow,
No honor to him does the world allow.
And yet he bears such scars upon his breast
As in old feudal times might won a crest:
His battle cry has oft the vanguard led,
And filled the hearts of those who heard with dread
His courage none can question—night and day
Both find him ready for relentless fray,
And yet, sans glory and sans habitat,
He slinks along—a vagrant Thomas Cat!

A Seasonable Search.

"Where are you going, my pretty maid?"
"I search for a husband, kind sir," she said.
"Do you look for love or wealth?" said he.
"Wealth first, then love, if so be," said she.

"Where will you seek him, my pretty maid?"
"I think I'll go plum'ing, kind sir," she said.
"But there are no plums for you now," said he.
"I spell my plum with a 'b,'" said she.

A Reliable Prognostication.

When he left the house and boarded the cable car, he did so with a gay and cheerful air. The jolly expression on his face attracted the attention of all. Often he chuckled deep, and now and then he laughed loudly.

When the car arrived at his office he got off briskly and actually pranced into the building, and he performed a double shuffle going up in the elevator. He gave the elevator boy a quarter, much to the amazement of that youth.

As soon as the door of his office closed behind him he broke out into wild and Bacchanalian song. Stretching out his arms, he danced as if overflowing with gaiety. He shouted "Ha ha!" and "Happy day!"

His partner ran out and asked him the whereabouts of it all, and he thereupon replied:

"Oh, I'm so happy! Nothing unfortunate is going to happen to me! Oh, joy!"

"What do you mean?" asked his partner, wondering whether it would be well to call for a policeman or an ambulance.

"Why, everything is bound to go well with me now! My wife said she felt a strange presentiment of evil this morning!"

And he continued to dance and sing.

MAMMA—You must stop eating cake for to night, Willie. You can't sleep on a full stomach. WILLIE—Well, I can sleep on my back.